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ABSTRACT

This issue of the Courier contains articles loosely connected to each other by the underlying theme of developing people's capacity to improve the quality of their lives. The following articles are included: "Development of Human Resources--A Basic Needs Approach," by Mohiuddin Ahmad; "Rural Poverty," by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization; "Overseas Students--Educating for Development or Privilege?" by Chris Duke; "Kemas: Kemajuan Masyarakat--Development of Society," by the Community Development Division, Ministry of National and Rural Development, Malaysia; "Two Worlds within Each Society: Lokayan's Efforts to Overcome the New Rift," by Rajni Kothari; "The Nepal Literacy Program," by World Education; and "Scheme of Developing the Peasants' Education Undertakings 1983-85, Jilin Province, China," by the Jilin Department of Education. (KC)

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ASIAN SOUTH PACIFIC
BUREAU OF
ADULT EDUCATION

PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION DEVELOPMENT ISSUES LITERACY

COURIER NO. 36
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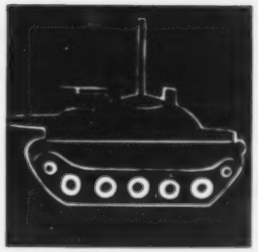

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INTRODUCTION

This issue of the Courier, No.36, April 1986, contains articles which are only loosely connected to one another. They have the underlying theme of developing people's capacity to improve the quality of their lives and cover a range of different ways of achieving this aim.

Mohiuddin Ahmad, a participatory researcher from Bangladesh writes about his country, which presents an enormous challenge to people concerned about poverty and deprivation. Four-fifths of the population live below the poverty line, only 60% of primary school age children have access to schools and there is one doctor for every 10,000 people. With this scale of poverty facing it Bangladesh is being encouraged, in this article, to look first to the people who need help and ensure that they fully participate in all programs aimed at assisting them. The position of women is emphasised since women's contribution to family welfare is often not recognised nor recorded in official statistics.

This is followed by an article on rural poverty from the FAO which examines the causes and implications of rural poverty for third world countries. It emphasises the dangers of rural youth drifting to the cities in search of work and the resultant serious consquences not only for those people but for urban and rural areas also. The problems of peasant and small-scale farmers are of concern to adult educators in Asia because these groups form a majority of the population in this region. Unless their needs are addressed overall development of the country will not be successful.

Chris Duke participated in a debate about Australia's role in providing educational opportunities, mainly in Universities, for overseas students. His comments are included here because they raise an interesting aspect of aid that is not often discussed by donor or recipient countries. Two important reports were published by the Australian Government in 1984 - one was on Australia's Aid Program (Jackson Report) and the other on Private Overseas Student Policy (Goldring Report). They adopted somewhat different approaches to the problem of support for overseas students wishing to study in Australia. Chris Duke looks at the positive and negative aspects of overseas study and whether this should be regarded as an appropriate area for aid funding. His conclusion is that aid money is better spent within the countries concerned in cooperation with appropriate local, national and regional bodies.

The Community Development Division of the Ministry of National and Rural Development in Malaysia is charged with finding ways of bringing adult education to rural areas to assist in their development. Their approach focuses on local leadership and involving as many of the local population as possible in the

development and implementation of their programs.

Rajni Kothari accepted the 1985 Right Livelihood Award on behalf of the Lokayan organization of India. This Award is often referred to as the Alternative Nobel Prize. Rajni Kothari's acceptance speech, which originally appeared in the IFDA Dossier No. 52 (March/April 1986), discusses the divisions that are present in every society between the majority and those who have access to power and privilege. Lokayan seeks to act as an intermediary between the people and the social processes that prevent them taking a full and active role in their society.

The next two articles are both descriptions of programs being undertaken with the aim of improving the quality of life of the participants. The first is a well-documented and illustrated account of the Nepal Literacy Program. This article has been written by three staff members of World Education who are involved in the Nepal Literacy Program. They have provided a detailed and interesting account of the approach used and the reasons for adopting such an approach. They would welcome discussion about the Program and their address is included at the end of the article for this purpose.

China has displayed considerable determination in its endeavour to improve the position of peasants within its society. The article by the Jilin Department of Education provides some background information about the philosophy behind the development of peasant education and its implementation in that region. While the basic outlines of such programs are developed centrally it is left to individual Provinces to implement them in a way that is most suitable to the problems and circumstances of their region. The magnitude of the problems faced are brought out clearly in this article and it again emphasises that unless people are involved in all aspects of planning that success will not be achieved.

(Yvonne Heslop)

DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES - A BASIC NEEDS APPROACH

Mohiuddin Ahmad

Introduction

It is now widely stated that the development and improvement of human resources as productive agents must be a central objective of development policies. This has led to a shift of emphasis from the concept of development through the accumulation of material wealth to increasing investment in human capital. This has already become a new creed to the policymakers and planners in developing countries with respect to the development of the human infrastructure.

The Genesis

Economic growth in industrially developed countries confirms the relative importance of non-material investment. Although the progress achieved in those countries manifests a spectacular increase in the stock of physical capital, the improvements in intangible human capital are no less significant.

Economic backwardness is largely revealed in the underdevelopment of human capital or human resources in developing countries and is manifest in several particular forms: low labour efficiency, factor immobility, limited specialisation in occupation, a deficient supply of entrepreneurship, customary values and traditional social institutions that minimise the incentives for economic change. The economic quality of the population remains low where there is little knowledge of what natural resources are available; the alternative production techniques that are possible; the necessary skills, the existing market conditions and the institutions that might be created to favour economizing effort and economic rationality. An improvement in the quality of the "human factor" is then as essential as investment in physical capital. An advance in knowledge and the diffusion of new ideas and objectives are necessary to remove economic backwardness and instill human activities and motivations that are more favourable to economic development. Although investment in material capital may indirectly achieve some lessening of the economic backwardness of human resources, the direct and more decisive means is through investment in human beings.

Situation in Bangladesh

It is imperative to discuss in brief the present situation in Bangladesh with respect to "human resources" at the outset. The average per capita income is 120 dollars only and over four-fifths of the population are considered to be below the poverty line in terms of minimum caloric requirement. They still live in poverty, in the

darkness of illiteracy and in shanty houses. About 60% of children of 5 to 9 years of age have access to primary education and only 2% among 15-24 years of age have access to higher education. There is only one doctor per 10,000 persons. This is the picture of human resources that exist in Bangladesh.

It is frequently quoted by persons in power and authority that thoug Bangladesh is poorly endowed with material resources, she possesses a vast reservoir of human resources. But when the Government and its agencies talk about strategies with respect to skill formation and raising technical capability of the population through education and training, research and extension, and institutional set-up with appropriate linkages between all these elements, it clearly reveals that our human resources are not that much resourceful, i.e. they are not well equipped and well organised to fit themselves in the development process as defined by the authority.

The Concept

The question that naturally arises is at what point a human being is to be treated as a human capital. The answer may lie in the following propositions:

- the person is to contribute positively to the income of the nation;
- the contribution should be at par with the potential the person possesses.

Two features from the above-mentioned propositions may follow which are:

- possession of necessary skill;
- gainful employment

Hence, the development of human resources essentially envisages the problem of developing an infrastructure and opportunities where the people can effectively contribute to the society through gainful employment. This necessitates the following:

- adequate employment opportunity for all;
- adequate programs for imparting necessary skills and know-how;
- a well designed investment plan and an execution mechanism to materialise the former.

In fact, the problem of human resource development cannot be separated from the problem of employment which has been clearly admitted in the second plan as such: "that a strategy of production of basic needs must be matched by a viable strategy of employment generation and human resources development so that the poor may have access to the item of basic needs." This highlights an issue of profound interest that the per capita consumption of the poor needs to be increased.

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The overwhelming majority of the population in Bangladesh are poor. It has been agreed by the planners in principle that the expansion of employment is a very important factor in increasing production and in generating purchasing power to distribute the fruits of increased output of goods and services. This may be squared with the proposition that all have a right to work. The right to work which implies that each person available for and willing to work should have an adequately remunerated job is said to be increasingly being recognised as one of the basic rights in Bangladesh.

Employment Situation

Now let us look at the present employment situation in Bangladesh. The official statistics, however, reveal some astonishing findings. According to the Pilot Manpower Survey undertaken by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics in 1979, percentages of employed population have been 87.6 and 3.7 for male and female population of 10 years of age and above respectively. Only 1.3% of the male civilian labour force have been found unemployed during the survey period. There had been no female unemployment. However, as much as 88.9% of the female population of the said age-group have been found to be engaged in "household work" and are not included in the "civilian labour office".

Nevertheless, these data give a very distorted picture with respect to the employment situation in Bangladesh. The overwhelming majority of this "employed" population live below the poverty line. Though they are employed, their employment is far from being remunerative to provide them with basic necessities of life. But the extent of this "underemployment" with respect to income has not been identified in the official statistics.

The data on female employment is quite ludicrous. The bulk of the women of working age have been omitted from the civilian labour force and have been found to be engaged in "household work". This clearly unfolds the typical attitude of the authority toward the women as if the women are not available for or willing to work in productive activities. In fact, their participation and contribution in productive activities, which is evident in almost all rural households, particularly among the poorer stratum, are not socially recognised. They do participate in such activities alongside with their typical "household responsibilities" in the rural sector. One finding reveals that as much as 71.21% of the women labour force in rural Bangladesh work as unpaid family helpers. It is also a fact that the women are frequently subject to wage discriminations.

From the above-mentioned discussions, the following conclusions may be drawn:

- The bulk of the labour force is either unemployed or underemployed;

- the women do participate in productive activities but are largely unpaid or underpaid vis-a-vis their contribution in productive activities which are not socially recognised;

- the consumption level of the people is too low which seems to work as a disincentive to participate in productive activities.

Basic-Needs Approach

The last proposition above unfolds one of the most fundamental problems that needs to be resolved prior to undertaking any planning exercise for the development of human resources. This envisages a basic-needs approach to the problem. Here it may be relevant to quote from an ILO report as such: development planning should include, as an explicit goal, the satisfaction of an absolute level of basic needs.

The concept of basic needs illuminated in this report includes two elements:

First, there are certain minimum requirements of a family for private consumption: adequate food, shelter and clothing are obviously included, as would be certain household equipment and furniture.

Secondly, they include essential services provided by and for the community at large, such as safe drinking water, sanitation, public transport, health and educational facilities.

A basic needs-oriented policy implies the participation of the people in making the decisions which affect them. Participation interacts with two main elements of a basic-needs strategy. For example, education and good health will facilitiate participation, and participation in turn will strengthen the claim for the material basic needs.

The satisfaction of an absolute level off basic needs as so defined should be placed within a broader framework - namely the fulfilment of basic human rights, which are not only ends in themselves but also contribute to the attainment of other goals.

Employment enters into a basic-needs strategy both as a means and as an end. Employment yields an output. It provides an income to the employed and it gives a person the recognition of being employed in something worthwhile.

The fulfilment of physical basic-needs targets in the poorer countries cannot be achieved by a redistribution of goods currently produced. Not only the structure of production must change, but the total amount of produce must also rise over time. For this reason, it should be stressed that a rapid rate of economic growth is an essential part of a basic-needs strategy. Part of the necessary increase in output will come from making use of currently underemployed and unemployed labour resources and linking them with a better allocation of capital, and partly through the redistribution of productive resources. Fuller employment would thus be a means of producing more goods and simultaneously of acquiring more purchasing power to gain access to them.

Improvement in the quality of employment or conditions of work should be another important objective. Many people's work at present is demoralising, undignified, inconvenient or even dangerous (to health if not to life). Thus making employment more humane and satisfying is also an element of a basic-needs strategy.

In order to fulfil the basic needs of the people, a very high rate of growth on its own is likely to worsen the pattern of income distribution as had been observed in many countries. Another way of meeting basic needs may be considered by combining rapid growth with substantial redistribution of income. This redistribution must result in the production of more basic goods and services. The generation of adequate employment opportunities is an essential component of this approach. The productive mobilisation of the unemployed and the under-employed vis-a-vis higher productivity of labour are also necessary to ensure both a level of output high enough to meet basic-needs targets and its proper distribution.

Redistribution of ownership or access to land and other resources combined with the reorientation of public services may bring about an improved distribution of income. In any case, this strategy implies a very high level of investment without which there will be no growth, no meaningful redistribution.

Government's Role

Our governments, both the present and previous ones, seem to agree verbally with this concept. Persons in power and authority frequently assure the people of 'more' employment, 'adequate' health care and education, 'appropriate' structural changes in social institutions, in public meetings and seminars. Targets are also set to achieve these: to double the production of food within five years, to provide universal health care facilities by the end of the 20th century, to provide facilities for primary education to all children of school-going age by 1985, and so forth. This type of slogan had been had been raised by all regimes but nothing was implemented to any significant extent. There had even been symptoms of further deterioration of the

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situation. The common people are at the brink of frustration and ruination. Every regime tries to find the root of all evils in the previous regime and promise a golden future. But the future never knocks on the door and lofty commitments end in sheer hypocrisy.

A critical review of governmental efforts and planning exercises done so far reveals that there is a big gap between commitment and implementation, between the expectation and the reality. Amidst this situation, it is very difficult to remain optimistic.

It has been evident that targets are often too ambitious and investment planning is contradictory to the objective. We must decide what things we need first: more power pumps or colour television, universal primary education or a palatial parliament building, employment for the parents of hungry children or a children's park, more industry or a new international airport.

To embark on a basic-needs strategy, it is necessary to determine a set of basic-needs targets. It is essential that the people whose basic needs have to be met should participate in the determination of these needs, rather than having them handed over from the above. It will probably be found that such participation is severely hampered by the lack of organisation that can express the views of the poorest groups on the one hand and by governmental interventions on the other.

People's Participation

Given the socio-politico-economic milieu of Bangladesh and past experiences, it is hardly convincing that the situation will undergo any radical transformation unless the participation of the people, particularly the rural poor who constitute the bulk of the population, is ensured. But this participation may take place effectively only when their right of participation is socially established, ie. when they will be able to establish their hegemony in all spheres of social life, turning the existing balance in the social power structure upside down.

This issue, however, entails certain political considerations. Hard realities of life reveal that the pious wish of developing human resources in the true sense of the term can never be materialised undermining the existing nexus of social relationships and the power structure. There have been enough academic exercises in this regard in the past and will be many more in future. But the problem remains unresolved. The clue lies in the political will of the people personified in the government and since the governments experienced so far failed to give response to popular interest or have their own interests and aspirations opposite to that of the people, the situation remained the same as had been in the past.

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NGO Experience

Since the liberation of Bangladesh, a host of non-government organisations (NGO) have been working with projects and activities in different areas of Bangladesh. Many of these have been striving for the development of human resources by adopting various means and programs which may be roughly summarised as follows:

- providing certain essential services, ie. non-formal education, health care facilities, population education and family planning services, etc, to the target audience;
- providing skill training in different fields;
- the mobilisation of the rural poor, particularly the landless and women through a process of conscientisation.

With respect to population education and related services in order to check the population boom, enough emphasis in terms of personnel and material has been given so far with negligible impact on the rate of fertility. It is probably reasonable to argue that the early satisfaction of basic needs of the poor and the consequent raising of aspirations will itself contribute to the reduction of fertility.

Similarly, it seems equally utopian to develop a sound health care system for the people, particularly the rural poor, by providing more health and nutrition education and clinical services unless the people are able to eat enough and live well. Remunerative employment itself may take care of the problem to a significant extent.

Many NGOs have been imparting non-formal education to the adult people in respective project areas. It is very difficult to assess their performances in this regard since these programs have not been duly evaluated in many cases. However, experience reveals that the illiterate adults seldom find any intereest in literacy since it does not bring any immediate material benefit to them. Frequent drop out of participants in many such centres has been experienced. In most cases, the participants lose interest in this program as soon as they become able to sign their names.

The development of small and cottage industries has been endeavoured by some NGOs by providing skill training and physical inputs to different groups and individuals. However, this is not working effectively due to the lack of an appropriate infrastructure. Shortage of operational capital and imperfect market conditions with respect to the procurement of inputs and disposal of outputs may be mentioned particularly in this respect. Often funders from abroad patronise these ventures whereby the foreigners are assured of luxury craft products by exploiting very cheap labour in Bangladesh. A lot of urban-based

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NGOs run and controlled by the elite are engaged in this program and have become career social workers by earning name and fame and frequent trips to foreign countries. Given the absence of a broad-based home market for these products, it could neither provide employment opportunity to the producers on a regular basis nor to a greater extent.

The Mobilisation of the Rural Poor

It has been mentioned earlier that the development of human resources needs to be correlated with the basic-needs strategy which should be addressed toward the poorest sections of the population. This necessitates an appropriate social infrastructure at the outset. Experiences reveal that a lot of programs endeavour to correct the periphery instead of healing the root cause of all problems.

Amidst this situation the question naturally arises - what is to be done? Here we like to emphasise once again that the proper development of human resources in the true sense of the term is possible only when there is an appropriate infrastructure in the society conducive to such development. This necessitates prior reorganistion of existing values and institutions without which the present state of things will continue to perpetuate.

The development and welfare of the bulk of the population may be achieved only when their conscious and active participation in determining their conditions of existence is ensured. To be specific, it is rather utopian to think about mass welfare unless the people are able to establish their hegemony in the society, in its political institution, the government. With this concept few NGOs have been working with the people, particularly the rural poor, in order to organise and mobilise their indigenous capability and power.

To them the explanation of poverty does not lie in the pressure of population upon resources, but in the organisation of these resources by a very small minority. This led to the strategy of working exclusively with the most exploited disadvantaged people who are at the bottom rung of the ladder, deprived from the real benefits of development efforts, struggling hard and yet unable to meet their minimum requirements.

All these efforts are supposed to lead to the creation of an organisation of the most exploited groups in the society so that they can build their confidence and strength in the process of taking control over their lives.

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They feel that the development of human resources will be the logical consequence of appropriate transformation in the existing institutional set up and a people's organisation is the only instrument that can achieve this in the long run. Thus to view the problem of the development of human resources independently and to embark on sporadic programs in this regard will eventually end in crocodile tears.

Conclusion

The write-up which has been presented here may not seem to be value-free. It is largely agreed that the ultimate goal of all development efforts is the welfare of the common people. However, there are sharp differences in opinion with respect to the meaning and extent of welfare on the one hand and with respect to means and strategies to be adopted on the other. Here certain value judgements have been explicit which may not seem "logical" to many belonging to different values. In fact, it is very difficult, rather impossible, to remain value-free ultimately.

RURAL POVERTY

FAO Feature

In most countries of the Third World, peasant farmers are the mainstay of agricultural production; it is their labour that has made possible the often considerable agricultural growth registered by developing countries in the past decade. Yet paradoxically, these very farmers have often benefited least from their countries' overall development.

A recent study of 68 developing countries revealed that 1,340 million out of some 2,000 million people lived in rural areas. Nearly half of these rural people were poverty-stricken and could scarcely meet their basic needs for survival. In Africa, more than half of the rural population in 16 countries live in absolute poverty.

While the largest number of countries with high incidence of rural poverty occurs in Africa, the Far East is by far the worst stricken in terms of absolute numbers; more than 467 million people or 67 per cent of the total rural population in the region (excluding China) lives below the poverty line.

Rural poverty: causes and implications

Poverty can be defined in many ways. A good working definition, however, is the inability to meet the basic necessities of life - above all food, shelter, clothing and health services - either directly or indirectly through barter or purchase. Since the vast majority of rural people in the Third World depend on agriculture for their livelihoods, it is primarily their productivity and income as farmers that determines their standard of living.

The single most important input for agricultural production is land, and it is here that the situation is most critical for the small-scale farmer in the developing world. FAO estimates that nearly a thousand million people are either landless or have so little land that it cannot produce enough food to feed their households. Sixty-four per cent of these households are in the Far East; more than half are in India and Bangladesh alone. About 20 per cent of the landless households are in Africa, 10 per cent in Latin America and the remaining six per cent in the Near East. While in Asia, Africa and the Near East much of the landlessness results from the scarcity of agricultural land. In Latin America it is caused by unequal distribution of the region's immense resources.

The amount and skills of labour available are also important in determining productivity. In most cases, peasant farmers must rely on

a combination of human and animal power. All too often, the supply of labour is barely adequate at the peak seasons of the farming cycle - planting and harvest - and any further decrease can spell disaster. A lack of labour and indebtedness, even for a short period, may be enough to trigger a downward spiral into poverty. For example, if someone falls ill or dies at harvest time, part or all of the crop may rot in the field. Saddled with debts, the household may then have to sell its draft animal to survive. Having sold the animal, the problems of achieving necessary production levels are compounded. Eventually, the family may be forced to sell off what little land it has and join the ranks of the landless poor.

An increasingly important cause of labour shortages is the population drift from rural to urban areas. The promises of work in the burgeoning cities of the Third World draws many young men away from rural areas; unfortunately, for most of them, the already crowded urban areas offer few or no opportunities. Thus, they transmit poverty to urban areas.

Even if the peasant farmer does manage to produce a surplus, other factors may still combine to create an adverse situation. For example, if agricultural and non-agricultural output increase at the same rate, the price of food tends to fall relative to non-food goods; the farmer's produce, in effect, becomes less valuable. Paradoxically, by contributing to overall economic growth, small-scale and landless farmers have often found themselves worse off than before.

Sometimes the price relationship between farm and non-farm products are deliberately turned against agriculture by government action, for example, to keep food prices low in urban areas, or to generate a surplus from rural areas for foreign exchange earnings. This not only holds down farm incomes, but it may also force farmers to dismiss landless labourers in their employ.

Finally, in many cases, governments show an "urban bias" with respect to basic services - health, sanitation, education, extension services - in response to political pressures from the usually more visible and more vocal urban community. The resulting lack of public services to rural populations hinders the achievement of their full productive potential and becomes yet another characteristic of poverty.

The human costs of rural poverty

Rural poverty, then, is both an effect and a cause of unsatisfactory agricultural development - a self-perpetuating downward spiral. The most tragic implications, however, are the social or human costs. While poverty is most often defined in terms of income, for peasant

farmers and landless labourers, poverty, is more realistically expressed in terms of undernutrition, illiteracy, high infant mortality and early death.

In countries where a high percentage of the rural population is poverty stricken, a much larger portion of the people are undernourished than in countries with low levels of rural poverty.

Generally speaking, people in poor countries have shorter life expectancy than those in countries that are better off. In Ethiopia, for example, average life expectancy at birth is less than 50 years, more than 60 in Brazil and over 70 in the United States. Within countries, the link between life expectancy and poverty also holds true. In Brazil, for example, according to the World Health Organization, people in the lowest income groups live an average of 41 years, compared to 62 years for those in the highest income bracket.

With regard to literacy, in 44 countries for which data are available, some 54 per cent of the adult population is illiterate in those countries where over 50 per cent of the rural population live in absolute poverty: in countries where less than 35 per cent of the of the rural population is poverty-stricken, the rate of illiteracy drops to 39 per cent.

Towards alleviation of rural poverty

At the 1979 World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (WCARRD), held in Rome, Italy, the representatives of 145 governments set themselves an ambitious goal: the elimination of hunger and the eradication of poverty before the year 2000. To reach that goal, the Conference agreed on a detailed Programme of Action as a blueprint for wideranging reforms and increased commitment of resources to agriculture in the developing world.

More than six years after WCARRD, what progress has been made towards alleviating rural poverty?

The WCARRD Programme of Action calls on governments to ensure "wide access to land ... for the vast majority of the rural masses". A study prepared for the 1983 FAO Conference found that several countries had undertaken land reforms, including Syria, Iraq, the Republic of Korea, Nicaragua and El Salvador. In the Republic of Korea, for example, the government set a maximum amount of land per person and redistributed excess holdings among the rural poor. By 1981, the real income of rural households had increased by 51 per cent and absolute poverty among the rural population was reduced to 1.5 per cent.

In Nicaragua, 1.2 million hectares of privately-held land were confiscated and transformed into state farms and small plots for landless farmers. Between 1978 and 1982, the average income of agricultural workers increased by about 300 per cent.

Overall, however, there has been no move towards major land redistribution. In fact, on a global scale, land scarcity and landlessness are increasing. In Pakistan, for example, the number of landless labourers doubled between 1971 and 1980. In Kenya, the ranks of landless peasants are increasing at an annual rate of five per cent. Between 1970 and 1981, land per agricultural worker decreased in all regions of the developing world, with the exception of Latin America, and here, the FAO study found that the gains had benefited wealthy large landholders, and not small-scale farmers. In fact, rural unemployment in the region rose to more than 40 per cent over the period.

Weighing the trends in access to land, the FAO study concluded, "Effective implementation of agrarian reform measures ... assumes even more importance in the 1980s than in the 1970s."

In addition to wider access to land, the WCARRD Programme of Action cites access to inputs, markets and services; agricultural training and extension; people's participation; and development of non-farm rural activities as essential for the alleviation of rural poverty.

Increasing credit for agriculture

Farmers need credit and marketing efficiency as much as they need land or labour. But in the past many governments have given priority to credit for industrial development at the expense of agriculture. Peasant farmers have received a disproportionately small share of agricultural credit, both because banks have rarely been located in rural areas and because lending institutions have viewed the small farmer with limited collateral as a bad risk.

In recent years, many developing countries have revised their policies to make agricultural credit more readily available. In Egypt, for example, in 1976 the government established a National Bank for Development of Agricultural Credit with branches in rural villages; by 1980 the number of agricultural loans had doubled. In Malawi, an experimental programme which permitted small farmers to pool their land as backing for loans for agricultural inputs resulted in dramatic increases in maize production.

In other cases, particularly in Latin America, even when more credit has been made available to agriculture, small-scale farmers have received only a minimal portion of total loans. Many banks are still biased in favour of larger operations and cash crops even though the

evidence suggests that small farmers are, in fact, less likely to default on loans.

Since WCARRD, many governments have begun programmes to improve small farmers' access to agricultural markets. While physical market facilities have been built or improved in many cases, the basic problem facing small farmers, that of obtaining fair prices for their produce, still remains. To help farmers overcome this problem, FAO is helping establish information systems that give them regular updates on market prices. Such systems have been tried in India, established in Indonesia and Kenya, and improved in the Republic of Korea, Brazil and Malaysia.

Another marketing problem for poor farmers is the small quantity of produce they have for sale. In several Asian countries, farmers have obtained higher prices by pooling their production for marketing. Similar efforts have been made in Kenya and Tanzania. In Papua New Guinea, Malaysia, Kenya, and Brazil, private entrepreneurs buy produce from small farmers and then re-sell it in bulk in the markets, obtaining higher prices for both themselves and the farmers.

Extension training for small-scale farmers

An increasing number of countries are redirecting agricultural training and extension towards small-scale farmers. In Africa, this change is evident in Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Rwanda, Tanzania and Zambia. In Tanzania, for example, the government has decentralized agricultural extension services, making them more responsive to regional and local needs. Bangladesh and Sri Lanka are reorganizing their extension services to reach the majority of small producers more effectively. In Brazil, of approximately 19,000 extension agents, 8,200 are now working directly with small farmers and their families.

When agricultural extension services focus on small farmers, they tend to require more resources and more personnel. To maximize the efficiency of extension services, more and more countries are turning to people's participation, an approach based on the formation of small groups of rural households with similar problems. People's participation not only enables a single extension agent to reach more rural workers, but the feedback from the participants helps to guarantee that the training relates directly to their needs. This participatory approach is also being used with success in agricultural planning. It is most developed in Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Mali, Rwanda and Thailand.

Increasing spending on agriculture

Efficiency, however, cannot compensate for an absolute lack of resources. Accordingly, the WCARRD Programme of Action also called

upon FAO member countries to spend more on agriculture and rural development.

In most of the 37 countries for which data for the period 1978 - 1982 are available, planned public expenditure in agriculture has increased in real terms but only at an average rate of 3 per cent a year and still represents, on the average, less than 10 per cent of total public spending. FAO estimates that 20 per cent is the minimum required for adequate agricultural development; at three per cent a year, it would take 23 years for these countries as a whole to reach this level. If considered by region or country, the figures are even more disturbing. Planned public expenditure in agriculture declined in real terms in 13 countries and in seven of these at the alarming rate of more than 10 per cent a year.

The progress toward a larger commitment of resources to agriculture has been the least satisfactory in Africa. Allocations to agriculture declined in six of the ten countries surveyed and the overall growth rate in spending on agriculture in Africa was only 0.7 per cent a year. In Ghana and the Gambia, spending on agriculture has dropped more than 10 per cent annually since WCARRD.

In Latin America, average growth was 1.9 per cent a year, with five countries recording declines of more than 10 per cent. The Near East showed a 10.1 per cent overall average increase in agricultural expenditure, but of the countries with large agricultural populations, only Egypt increased its level of spending significantly.

Relatively better progress has been made by the countries in Asia. Five countries of the seven studied had a rate of growth of more than 10 per cent per year, and two - Thailand and Sri Lanka - increased allocation to agriculture by more than 20 per cent per year.

Not only has agricultural spending increased unsatisfactorily overall, but the performance of countries with the highest rates of rural poverty was consistently the worst; the poor got less. From 1978 - 1982, agricultural spending on a per capita basis was only US$13.40 in countries where more than 50 per cent of the rural population is poverty stricken, as compared to over US$36 in countries where one third or less of the rural population is affected by poverty.

In the end, people are every nation's most important resource. Their production and consumption are the driving forces behind national development. A nation in which a large part of the population suffers the scourge of poverty cannot hope to reach its full potential.

In the developing countries, where agriculture makes up the bulk of total production, raising the standard of living of rural populations is a key to the achievement of development goals. More and more governments are re-directing priorities towards rural development, and many have made progress in easing the burden of their rural poor. Yet hundreds of millions of people still lack adequate food, health, education, employment, shelter and human dignity. FAO's fortieth anniversary - World Food Day - provides an opportune moment for governments, organizations and individuals to renew their commitment to the elimination of rural poverty.

OVERSEAS STUDENTS - EDUCATING FOR DEVELOPMENT OR PRIVILEGE?

Chris Duke

Scanning the debate in recent days this is not the question that is being asked. Rather it is a matter of calculating the balance of Australian interests. The needs of third world countries do not appear generally to enter into this calculation. In the absence of deliberate efforts to the contrary we may be confident that education in a society and system like ours will be for privilege. It will tend to reflect and amplify existing inequalities rather than reduce them. It may contribute to national economic development in a general sense, although there is less confidence even about this than was the case two decades ago.

We need to take a step back and ask what is meant by development. It is often qualified nowadays by terms like social, real, authentic - indications of disappointment with the inequalities and undesirable side-effects of classic modernisation approaches. We see in Australia, no less than in the third world, a naive, and sometimes not so innocent, assumption or assertion that what is good for BHP* (or whoever) is good for Australia and all Australians. It is a mixture of 'log cabin to White House', blaming those who do not make it, and asserting or assuming that 'trickle down' automatically occurs - and that growth is a prerequisite for prosperity and happiness.

There isn't time to address these matters in any depth. Instead I will settle for some crude assertions as a basis for discussion.

Education will only be oriented towards the reduction of inequality and the advantage of the under-privileged if the government is committed to redistribution and equity, and will use education as a tool to this end. This points to socialist planned economies - just those countries we tend to be less likely to favour and assist. Even 'good' relatively free market economy governments often lack the will and capacity to carry through their own good intentions - witness the Indian National Adult Education Programme. In extreme cases our aid is more likely to be building roads for repression than supporting popular authentic development whether the aid is spent here or in the recipient country.

Classically, education in the third world has been supported from donor countries with the effect of opening up markets and sources of needed materials - preparing good, increasingly dependent, consumers and producers. 'New paradigms' of development which go beyond

*Broken Hill Proprietary - largest Australian company

unquestioning modernisation tend to find little favour with aid governments (or their advisers). So dependency, internally and internationally, tends to be the result. There are exceptions mainly in the NGO sector and perhaps with a few of the donor governments of the far North.

The Australian debate following Jackson and Goldring[1] seems to be mainly on our, not even mutual, advantage and is about the calculus of interests and costs referred to earlier.

In terms of self-interest we can clearly sell education as a service product both here and abroad for a while, and at least short-term business interests argue for this. (It will not worry me if this enhances the competitiveness with us in terms of industry, trade and commence of our Asian neighbours and partners. I think the trajectories of ours and our neighbours' economies will continue pretty much irrespective of this, but we might push things along a little faster and win more goodwill by accepting more rather than fewer government-sponsored and private students.) There are surely good PR gains from having Asian students here (especially if we can back the winning side occasionally in situations of political instability - as the greatest and wealthiest of the democracies has tended not to do too well over the years). And there are surely considerable gains in reducing ethnocentrism through more one-to-one contacts which increasing overseas student numbers produces.

If we come back to 'development' and the interests of the mass of the people in the recipient countries we get a very different picture. Let us put aside the possibility of brain drain, real though they may be. There is a more subtle problem: the disorientation and disaffection of the pull of the metropolitan non-Asian culture on those who study overseas. My colleague Dr Kowit, head of nonformal education in Thailand, reckons that it takes about as long to undo this damage on a Thai studying overseas as it takes to get the American PhD which advances the individual in his or her career back home - and may or may not equip her or him to do the job the government of Thailand has paid for. Some are permanently metropolitanised and decultured - like some Northern [Australia] Territorian Aborigines coming in to study and become 'bicultural' in Darwin and Alice [Springs] - and never recover their identity and purpose, at least back home - and especially out in the North-East away from Bangkok, Dhaka or wherever. "

Generally bringing people to study here almost inevitably widens the gaps back home and builds up an advantaged metropolitan class. 'Trickle down' and the hidden hand of benevolent progress for all has not proved to work in societies and economic systems like our own, and we have no reason to believe that it works in India, the Republic of Korea, or around the ASEAN nations - although government imposition of actions for collective purposes can be fruitful, if unpalateable to our liberal tradition.

I am sceptical whether Australian aid is really meant to have anything to do with equity and people's development. It is unlikely that our present [Labor] government, any more than the previous one [conservative] maybe less, originally - will put substantial resources into equalising development, or take effective action to alter the lot of 'the poorest of the poor'. Both our own and the partner governments lack the political will for this.

If this were the purpose we would not be spending money to bring middle class students from Asia to Australia (though we would go on doing this out of self-interest and probably call it aid). We would put money into indigenous and local - non-metropolitan - institutions and programmes, probably through our own NGOs and much of it to Asian NGOs, which are committed to people's mobilisation and local development rather than to metropolitanisation. I am highly sceptical whether this will occur except as a token makeweight, because it is not what our aid programmes are really about - after all ADAB* is a servant system of Foreign Affairs, and even Education and Youth Affairs has little muscle in such matters and quarters. If our government were serious about such matters it might set some conditions and monitor results in its aid programmes, but you could argue that it would be hypocritical to do this when at home we behave as though we believe 'development' will restore full employment and flow on naturally into redistributive equity.

To return to the point: overseas students in Australia almost inevitably means aid for privilege and privilege-oriented kinds of development. I still welcome overseas students here and would like to see more of them - for our sake mainly. (I don't like the idea of setting quotas in our free entreprise system to spread them around evenly and invisibly, by the way.) But I do not confuse this with aid likely to help the less advantaged in the third world. For this I would be promoting the approaches of the non-government organisation (NGO) which I work for, the International Council for Adult Education, which is fostering networks and programmes committed for instance to participatory research to empower ordinary people, primary health care programmes for barefoot doctor type work out in the villages, women's networks, inquiries into the effects of adult education programmes on the reduction of poverty, promotion of mass literacy campaigns, and so on.

Maybe we should propose that the government gives one dollar of non-formal educational aid money via Australian NGOs for every 5 or even 10 dollars which go to finance privilege through overseas students?

* ADAB = Australian Development Assistance Bureau

1. Jackson, G.R., 1984 Report of the Committee to Review the Australian Aid Program, AGPS, Canberra.
Goldring J., 1984 Mutual Advantage: report of the Committee of Review of Private Overseas Student Policy, Canberra, AGPS, Parliamentary Paper No. 306/1984

AND THEN THERE WAS THE CONTENT OF TEACHING IN THAT SORT OF SCHOOL. IT WAS TOTALLY ABSTRACT AND THE BOOKS WERE SEEN AS THE ONLY SOURCE OF KNOWLEDGE

BECAUSE OF THAT, THE PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE OF PEASANTS AND OLD PEOPLE WAS LAUGHED AT

AND THAT'S NOT ALL - THERE WAS ANOTHER FACT: PUPILS OF THAT SCHOOL WERE TOTALLY SEPARATED FROM PRODUCTION

THEY DID NOTHING BUT STUDY

THEY MOVED TOWARDS THEIR DEGREES ON THE BACK OF THE WORKERS.

KEMAS: KEMAJUAN MASYARAKAT - DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIETY

(A brief outline of the structure and activities of the Community Development Division, Ministry of National and Rural Development, Malaysia)

Introduction

The inception of the New Economic Policy in 1970 has seen rapid progress in the rural areas of Malaysia. The NEP's main objective of eradicating poverty in the rural areas and increasing self-sufficiency in food production emphasises production targets in such areas as agriculture, livestock, forestry and fishing.

The prime target of government efforts, therefore has been the rural community, primarily those engaged in agriculture and fishing. But development had largely been confined to physical improvements such as increase of planting acreage, infrastructure, etc. To ensure meaningful development and progress, social and physical development must go hand-in-hand. Since the Third Malaysia Plan, the government has realized that total development can only be achieved if it centres around the farmer and his family.

It was with this policy in view that a Community Development Division, code named KEMAS (coined from the Bahasa Malaysia phrase, Kemajuan Masyarakat, meaning 'Development of Society') was established by the Ministry of National and Rural Development.

Background

The first Five Year Plan of Malaysia (1960 - 1965) saw the beginning of the government's interest in rural development with the start of the Rural Economic Development Programme. Schools, clinics, mosques, public halls, roads and bridges started coming up in the rural areas. Water, power supply and telephones were provided wherever possible. Farmers, rubber smallholders and fishermen were given grants and subsidies to help them improve their production. But the projects though successful in themselves did not meet the total needs required for community development. The government in its zeal failed to realize the people were not literate enough to understand the government's objective in providing these facilities. They were merely receivers of the gifts presented to them by the government. The physical assistance and materials, therefore, did not make much difference to the productivity or standard of living of rural people.

Realizing this the government set up an Adult Education Division in the Ministry of National and Rural Development. In 1961 the Adult

Education Project started on a non-formal basis concentrating mainly on eradicating illiteracy among the 3 million illiterates of Malaysia. An average of 500,000 adults yearly were being taught by formal school teachers. By 1969 the Adult Education Project had almost achieved its aim.

In 1970 with the launching of the New Economic Policy, Malaysia intensified its efforts towards eradicating poverty among its people. The Adult Education Division accordingly expanded its activities to the wider perspective of community development. The Adult Education Division thus came to be known as the Community Development Division or KEMAS, with the objective of bringing about socio-economic development of the individual and the community as a whole.

Activities

KEMAS carries out its activities in the form of Non-formal Education through learning groups and training of community leaders at village level. Programmes are classified under three broad categories, i.e. Literacy Programmes, Family Development Programmes and Skills Training Programmes.

* Literacy Programmes

  - Basic literacy classes as mentioned earlier were successfully carried out in Peninsular Malaysia to eradicate illiteracy. However, this activity is still actively carried on in Sabah and Sarawak (East Malaysia) where it was started in 1965.

  - Functional literacy classes where basic literacy is combined with imparting knowledge and skills tailored to the everyday life and livelihood of specific communities. The curriculum encompasses the 3Rs together with discussions on how to improve the quality of life, increase income productivity and information that contributes to material and spiritual improvement. This activity was started in 1977 as an experiment with a small number of groups. There are at present 388 classes with 5,142 participants.

  - Rural libraries are intended to promote reading habits among both adults and children. It also serves as a follow-up of the Basic and Functional Literacy programmes by providing continuous reading material for them to practise their newly-acquired ability to read. Started in 1971 with 80 centres, it has now expanded to 141 as well as mobile libraries.

* Family Development Programmes

  These programmes focus mainly on rural women folk and are intended to improve the standard of family life, in the form of home

economic activities. These activites are geared towards providing knowledge and skills to women on better nutrition and family health. Classes and training are provided on such skills as tailoring, handicrafts, agriculture, etc. These skills not only save expenditure but also in most instances supplement family income.

Visits are arranged by home economic demonstration units from village to village, giving talks and demonstrations on nutrition, environmental sanitation, health and consumer topics.

This activity was started in 1963. Since then approximately three million women have benefitted and at present 47,130 women are actively participating in this activity. It is perhaps the most important aspect of KEMAS's activities as well as the most beneficial, for the well-being of a family depends on the education and attitudes of its women.

- Training

Training is provided in handicraft and vocational skills as well as in community leadership. This training is mainly for members of village committees, youth and other individuals.

Handicraft and vocational skills are taught to selected youths on an apprenticeship basis or on a classroom basis as necessary, varying with the type of skills involved.

Training for community leaders is provided for women and men separately. Short orientation courses are held for women to expose them to development concepts and make them aware of the potential for improvement to their homes and families. A number of participants are chosen from each village so that upon rturn they will be able to act as the nucleus for the purpose of influencing other women in community development.

Two-week courses are given in the mechanics of leadership, organisation and management to men leaders and members of village committees. These courses are conducted as practical sessions as far as possible.

Other Activities

Besides the activities described above, KEMAS has two major on-going projects - kindergarten or pre-school classes and economically viable community projects.

Kindergarten Classes are conducted by KEMAS on the non-formal concept of 'learning while playing'. The objective of this project is nurture

a healthy body, enquiring mind, tolerance and self-confidence in growing children.

Children between the ages of four and six are taught and supervised by a trained worker and her assistant at each centre. The workers are usually young women from the villages. A minimum educational requisite of Lower Secondary School pass is necessary before they are sent for training. These young women undergo a 9-month specialised training programme. The Ministry of National and Rural Development conducts these training courses at their three centres in Melaka, Kuala Lumpur and Klang. The courses are approved by the Ministry of Education and are set along the guidelines drawn up by such world bodies as Unesco, Unicef, etc.

These pre-school classes were started on an experimental basis in 1970 with 10 trained teachers. There are, at present 2,268 centres all over Malaysia with an average of 35 children and one teacher to a centre. Parents, especially mothers are encouraged to participate in this activity. A small fee of M$3 is usually paid towards the nutritious snacks provided to the children. Mothers are invited to prepare this food, thus teaching them to prepare nutritious food with locally available materials. The day to day operation and management of the kindergarten centres is the responsibility of the village committee of local people. Health services are provided by local government health departments by way of regular medical inspections and follow-up action.

Economic Community Projects are adult education classes developed into economically viable community projects on a co-operative basis, the profits or produce being shared among the participants.

Classes in agricclture, fish rearing, poultry farming and handicrafts are developed into economically productive ventures. Rural markets are established to provide an outlet for the produce. KEMAS provides advice and guidance as well as initial funding.

One of the most recent and ambitious projects (still in the experimental stage) is Karyaneka or works of art. Under this project handicrafts produced from local materials are marketed and the profits returned to the people. Most of the work is produced by rural women from all over Malaysia. The state centres collect the finished product and some are sold locally while most are sent to the main centre in Kuala Lumpur for export.

Conclusion

It would not be possible to give a detailed account of KEMAS's wide-spread activities or the many problems involved in this brief paper.

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Adult education in Malaysia is widely diffused and carried out by various agencies, both government and non-government, giving rise to some confusion and conflict among them. A pressing need, therefore, is one main body to co-ordinate these activities so that they will be more effective and viable.

But before this can be effected, there is a need for programme or project evaluation. This is necessary as the success or failure of a programme depends on the co-relation between the needs of the people and the existing facilities provided by the agencies. The services have to meet the needs of the people and not the needs imagined by the agencies.

The main problem faced by KEMAS is lack of suitably trained field personnel, people who understand and are able to work with rural people.

Another difficulty is the enlistment of suitable participants for leadership at village level. Village Development and Security Committees are set up to decide on suitability, viability and necessity of a proposed programme. Thus the need for leaders who are versatile and concerned enough to perceive and modify the needs of their people.

Although KEMAS is confronted by many problems in meeting the needs of the people and trying to achieve the government's goals, they are doing a fairly effective job in eradicating poverty and illiteracy in rural Malaysia.

TWO WORLDS WITHIN EACH SOCIETY: LOKAYAN'S EFFORTS TO OVERCOME THE NEW RIFT

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Rajni Kothari's Right Livelihood Award Acceptance Speech

Abstract: In the following acceptance speech of the Right Livelihood Award, often referred to as the Alternative Nobel Prize (Stockholm, 9 December 1985) Rajni Kothari, initiator of Lokayan, Exchange Building, 13 Alipur Road, Delhi 110 054, India and current co-chairperson of the IFDA Council, addresses the crucial theme of the "two worlds" within every society, in every space. Some - the majorities - are pushed not only to the peripheries of economic and political systems, but also to the peripheries of our consciousness. Such an "amnesia" is the most dangerous that can happen, and it is what Lokayan wants to contribute to overcome in India. Conceive as an alternative intellectual effort to intervene in the social processes (not the party political process) through dialogues with the people, Lokayan, positioned at the point of convergence between the masses, activists and intellectuals, is an effort to open up the spaces of both the State and the civil society.

May I on behalf of the Lokayan community of activists, scholars, and intellectuals and the scores of concerned individuals and organizations that have supported Lokayan over the nearly six years of its existence, extend our warm greetings and grateful thanks to the Right Livelihood Foundation, the Swedish Parliament and the Swedish society and people. Ours is a fairly modest and still developing endeavour towards broadening the base of the democratic process in India by drawing upon diverse practical initiatives and experiments in alternatives at the grassroots of our society as well as new thinking and reflection that have become necessary at the macro level as a consequence of this.

Lokayan has been conceived as an intellectual effort that is different from mainstream academic work and a political effort that is different from mainstream politics. It is so both in content and even more in style. It is an effort at both listening to, and interpreting, the grassroots dimension of the democratic process, articulating and nurturing the same. We seek to comprehend what is going on but we also intervene whenever necessary, in humility and in a spirit of shared experience. And we engage in frank exchanges and debates, mutual criticism and dialogue - for we believe that dialogue is the essence of the democratic process, provided it is "dialogue of the people" and not just among the privileged, and provided it is dialogue not for its own sake but for participating in collective transformation involving both micro and macro thresholds.

Lokayan believes in intervening in the social process through the method of dialogue and its concomitant processes - providing a broad platform of debate, documenting reality on diverse issues, undertaking research arising out of felt need of activists, and disseminating all this widely among both activists and the public at large. It believes in the primacy of dialogue because of its perceptions that we live in a deeply divided world with increasing loss of contact between the divisions and growing estrangement between them. It is an estrangement that not only promotes ignorance and loss of empathy, but through capsuled stereotypes and immunization, apathy and amnesia. We live in a habitat consisting of two worlds that are so wide apart that it is just not possible to think of them as being one. This is not along the post-war stereotypes of the capitalist and communist worlds or the North and the South or the earlier one of the West versus the East. The two worlds I speak of cut across all these along the simple indicators of human survival and access to resources and life opportunities as well as access to political power and decision-making institutions.

The "two worlds" are also found within each nation and at the lower reaches of territorial existence. Thus there are not just two worlds inhabiting this planet of ours but also two Indias; and within India, each political entity and each human settlement, whether urban or rural, is split into two. This split undermines both larger unities of the national or the subregional kind and the sense of community at the local level. But even worse than this, there is another process at work that undermines the rich social diversity and cultural plurality through which a sense of unity had been organically felt for so long. Modern technology and the modern State seek to deal with the problem of poverty or exploitation or inequity by imposing centralizing and homogenizing solutions that are meant to "integrate" various elements. But in fact, modern economy and the modern State destroy natural and cultural diversity and far from integrating in fact, produce a basically dualist economy and centralising State. The modern project of integration, whether into the world economic market or into the world strategic order and the technological marketplace, has effectively split each society into two. And the more the integration of the one segment, the less the care and understanding and knowledge about the other.

The Lokayan dialogues and related processes are a way of raising issues that go to the heart of the great divide between the two Indias and the two worlds that these two Indias epitomize. We do this in a variety of ways: through contact and communication between academics, professionals and opinion-makers residing in the metropolitan world and activists and political cadres working among groups and constituencies in the non-metropolitan, "vernacular" world.

Through dialogue among individuals sensitized to the grass-roots reality in different ways or having different ideological interpretations of that reality. And above all through establishing contact and

building relationships among the activists themselves and through them the diverse public they attempt to serve. We have found that the world of action too is a highly divided world. And so is the world of knowledge and social analysis and ideological interpretation. Lokayan is an attempt to build bridges across both the world of action and the world of knowledge. It is also an attempt at normative interventions - we seek to do all this simultaneously and not in separate compartments of reflection and action, theory and praxis, science and practical knowledge. In this lies Lokayan's distinctiveness, as a method of social intervention: relating and interrelating diverse segments of practical reality and enabling the practitioners of knowledge to participate in the building of the same interrelationships.

Lokayan also represents a mode of action, of intervention, of politics, of struggle. While its members operate outside the Parliamentary and the party spaces, their work and activities, including the knowledge and intellectual debate they generate, are clearly political in nature. It is just that these are carried out at different thresholds of the political process, through quite different infrastructures of democratic participation from those in which political parties and electoral machines operate. And in articulating this process, Lokayan activists employ forms and procedures of intellectual intervention in ways that assist and enhance the political role of action groups and individuals engaged in political acts. Lokayan's innovation is to closely relate its activities to the concerns and problems of those involved in political action, from the grassroots to the national - and in some ways international - thresholds. On the other hand, Lokayan operates from a basic premise arising out of its perception and understanding of the crisis of our times: that it is fundamentally an intellectual crisis, a crisis of ideas, a crisis of human knowledge, both generally but especially in the social arena. The stock of theories and models of social change and progress that have shaped the modern industrial civilization, its colonial expansion and its subsequent even larger expansion through the paradigm of modernization and 'development' has created the world we live in. It is a world in an undesirable state in numerous ways, among other things because of this intellectual tutelage of the whole world to the post-Enlightenment Western models and to the framework of modern science and technology through which these models have structured patterns of domination, manipulation and violence. This undesirable state of affairs cannot be substantially changed without raising basic questions about the structure of economic and political reality and the ideas and assumptions underlying it. Of course, we must also come forward with alternative answers to existing ways of managing the world. And this is a fundamentally intellectual task, an intellectual-political task. This is our conviction.

It is in the manner of conceiving and pursuing this intellectual-political task that Lokayan's specificity and methodology has developed. Lokayan has been a movement away from specialized knowledge to what we call social knowledge. Second, while it promotes carefully

conducted studies in selected problem areas, it has moved away from the cool and amoral conception of scientific objectivity which does not permit one to take sides. We, in Lokayan, believe in taking sides, not in any dogmatic or sectarian manner or in any watertight ideological frame but on the basis of informed consideration of diverse or opposing points of view and a "dialogue" among these. And third, Lokayan conceives of the knowledge process as one of participation and involvement of diverse people, not just academics and intellectuals but activists, professionals and politicians as well. Indeed, Lokayan's basic input into India's intellectual, political and social life has been that based on the activist-intellectual interactions which are raising new issues, asking unconventional questions and, as we shall see, redefining the agenda of both political action and political theory.

Our activity of raising new questions and coming up with new issues does not take place in a vacuum. Nor is there some previously well thought out grand design that only ideologues and model-builders are given to indulge in. Our thinking has gradually crystallized from a series of interactions between different strands, arising out of struggles against existing hegemonies in the social structure, resistance to exploitation and inequities generated by the development process, new forms of protest within the broad civil liberties and human rights movement, and new and alternative ideas and experiments in technology, social and economic organization and modes of decision-making and participation. Lokayan's is an effort to broaden the scope and the range of politics, to open up new spaces in both the sphere of the State and in the large and complex terrain of civil society outside the State, which in India presents a vast arena. It is this simultaneous process of "conscientization", engagement in actual struggles as well as a search of new alternatives on a variety of concrete tasks that Lokayan is concerned with.

It is a process that has given rise to a new class of people drawn from the highly conscious and politicised stream of the middle classes. These individuals are engaged in a wide range of grassroots activism but also in broad touch with the larger context within which their work among the distressed and the restless masses has to be carried out. It is from this convergence of restless people increasingly conscious of their plight and a conscientious and equally restless class of volunteer politicians (to be distinguished from professional party politicians) on the one hand and restless intellectuals on the other that the new grassroots movements are emerging and pressing on the mainstream political process in India. Such convergence of masses, activists and intellectuals is gradually making it possible to articulate and present the large numbers and wide range of micro experiments and struggles in a macro perspective. This is precisely where Lokayan's overall aim and perspective lie - in bringing to bear at the threshold of macro politics the stirrings and struggles that have appeared in a variety of micro settings. It is a process still under way and has by no mean been fulfilled. But it has begun.

From this process another convergence is taking shape: new definitions of the agenda of politics and the rise of new social movements. For example, the issue of environment. It is not something that can any longer be left to experts in ecology or in economic development or to departments of environment. These departments may have been set up in response to popular pressures but they have now become part of the bureaucratic status quo. Nor can environmental problems be left to be sorted out in the future. The environment must be preserved and regenerated here and now and cannot be left to pious declarations of governments. It must become part of peoples' own active involvement, including agitations to restrain the State and corporate interests from destroying the resources base of the poor, of future generations as well as the resources of non-human species and plants with whom our lives are organically linked. Ordinary people understand this much more than experts. They only have to be made aware that these also happen to be their rights.

The same is the case with health, with access and entitlement to food and nutrition, with shelter and housing. It is increasingly being realized that the new hazards to health, the new epidemics that are breaking out, and the problems associated with modern drugs are in good part a product precisely of experts in the medical profession. The horrors let loose by chemical industries and nuclear plants are increasingly coming to light; the tragedy in Bhopal dramatised it but this is happening in many other places too. The so-called self-reliance in food production (as in India) has little to do with actual access and entitlement to that food for the poor, and the same applies to shelter and housing and the availability of drinking water and access to fuel. The green and white "revolutions", the revolution in materials technology and the umpteen schemes of "housing for the poor" have not been able to remove the scourge of hunger and malnutrition, of millions being shelterless, of still more millions being driven from the rural areas into ghettos of dirt, squalor and disease in the cities from where, too, they are bulldozed and driven away and tossed around hither and thither. The poor have been reduced to being stateless people in their own State. All this is making matters that were hitherto considered issues for experts and specialized handling into urgent political tasks.

Implied in this is yet another change that has taken place in the thinking on development which has a bearing on practical politics and on intellectual work. The earlier logic of development based on accumulation-distribution - in which distribution was to be taken care of at a later stage - has been exposed and repudiated. Implied in that logic was another presumption, never fully spelt out. It looked upon people as objects, not as subjects in their own right; as beneficiaries of the process of development, not as direct participants in it. Thus, they had no control over how things should go. And things <u>have</u> gone awry. This is now being realized. And with this realization has also come the conviction that the process of distribution, access and empowerment, or narrowing gaps and countering monopolies are matters in which the people themselves will have to be involved, through their own organizations and through their own con-

ceptions of what is relevant and what is not. These are issues of sheer survival; they are too serious to be left to either technocrats or professional politicians.

Nowhere is the enlargement and redefinition of the scope of politics brought out as vividly and dramatically as in what is called the women's movement. I prefer to think of it as a feminist input into our whole thinking on politics. It has not just enlarged the scope of politics by bringing into its ambit what was until recently considered a personal and private world. From a position that the personal and the political are polar opposites to one that "personal is political" on to the position that "political is personal" is a massive shift, not just in the position of women in politics but in our whole understanding of politics as such.

The entry of women into politics is leading to new approaches and methods to deal with basic problems like the environment, health, drunkenness, sanitation, reassertion of the community and the choice of technology. The feminist input serves not just women, but also men. There is no limiting relationship between feminist values and being a woman. Above all, there is emerging an unprecedented convergence - between the ecological and feminist movements and between the two of them and the peace movement. This has already happened in Europe with the spectacular spread of the peace movement and with the affirmation that peace and disarmament are too important to be left to governments. In realising that, left to themselves, governments will, in all likelihood, blow up the world, women have played a major role. This is yet to happen in our part of the world. Our people are still under the spell of theories of threat from within and without. But the awakening will come there too even if it takes time and calls for much greater effort to build pressures from the grassroots; we just cannot afford to be prisoners of this arms race, and women will have to play a major role in changing this.

But the more important point is one about the inter-relationship of issues and movements, of a holistic approach to life, which goes against the grain of the modern scientific culture with its emphasis on specialization and fragmentation. As women come out of their presently narrow approach of catching up with men, and as feminist values become more generalised for humanity as a whole, a holistic approach will develop. It will be an approach that is also plural and based on complementarities. This is more likely to happen in the non-Western world than in the West because our cultures have always been embedded in a holistic way of life; they have just been recessive in recent times.

I have said earlier that it is in this effort at interrelating issues and transcending a specialized conception of both knowledge and action and, through such a conception, also interrelating levels and

thresholds - of micro and macro - that Lokayan has found its role both as an articulator of what is already under way and as an intervener in it by raising new questions and initiating dialogue and debates on them. It is this perception of our role through the method of dialogue that has made it possible for us to transcend the gaps that exist between the world of action and the world of intellect (a dichotomy that is based on a rather narrow view of knowledge) and between both these worlds and the organs of public opinion (imperceptibly the content of both reportage and commentary in the press and in other media has been changing). And in the same manner, we also hope to transcend the gap between the modern metropolitan world and the "vernacular" world from which it has over time got so alienated. We are still struggling at this because so many of us live in the metropolitan world even if the political leaders of that world wished we were not there. We raise critical voices which they wish were not raised.

Our efforts are by no means successful; all we can claim is that the voices which we reflect and articulate cannot any longer be suppressed. We do realise the larger context in which we operate. It is a context in which the engines of growth are in decline, where the organised working class is not growing and the process of marginalisation is spreading, where technology is turning anti-people, where development has become an instrument of the privileged class, and the State has lost its role as an agent of transformation, or even as a protector and mediator in the affairs of the civil society. In fact one finds that the whole relationship between the State and civil society is increasingly being visited by a growing coercion of the State apparatus. There is a growing demand for unity and consensus - not in the form of an organic expression of civil society but in the form of compliance with whatever happens to be the ruling orthodoxy - dissent from which is considered illegitimate. And as this happens, the State becomes more and more repressive.

All this is taking place within a global context in which the centralising thrust does not stop at the national centre; it makes the nation-state itself an abject onlooker and a client of a global "world order". It is a context of growing international pressures and subtle brainwashing that herald an end of self-reliance of the Third World countries. There is at work a process of integration of the organised national economy into the world market while removing millions of people from the economy by throwing them into the dustbin of history - impoverished, destitute, drained of their own resources and deprived of mininum requirements of health and nutrition, denied 'entitlement' to food, fuel, water and shelter and even access to their traditional cultures. In short they have been made an unwanted and dispensable lot whose fate seems to be 'doomed'.

It is with the plight of these rejects of society and or organized politics that the grassroots movements and non-party formations in India are concerned. They are a part of the democratic struggle at

various levels, in a radically different social context from what was posited both by the incrementalists and the revolutionaries. They have sprung up at a point of history when existing institutions and the theoretical models on which they were based have run their course. There is a search for new instruments of political action in the large vacuums in political space that are emerging, thanks to the decline in the role of the State as an agent of transformation and the virtual collapse of 'government' in large parts of rural India. The grassroots movements and non-party formations are based on deep stirrings of consciousness, on an awareness of crisis that can conceivably be turned into a catalyst of new opportunities. They need to be seen as a response to the incapacity of the State to hold its various constituents in a framework of positive action, its growing refusal (not just inability) to 'deliver the goods' when it comes to the poor and its increasingly repressive character. The repression is directed against vulnerable sections of the population, activists working among them, intellectual dissidents and groups and organizations associated with these. What these groups and organizations are in fact doing is to open alternative political spaces outside the State. When the State and other vested interests mount a backlash, these organizations are called upon to play a further role of nurturing and providing protection to the victims of this backlash. Lokayan both joins in this effort and sensitizes the wider public to the realities on the ground.

In sum, the phenomenon of 'grassroots' activism is a part of an attempt to kindle faith and energy in anti-establishment forces in a variety of settings at a time of general drift and loss of elan. It is also a time when the suffering masses are scared of confrontation with the status quo, and thus, a time which calls forth people who have the will, creativity and a readiness to wage sustained struggles, not just against a particular local tyrant but against the larger system, both national and international.

Not everyone involved in popular movements sees it in this manner. Many of them are too preoccupied with immediate struggles to be able to think in wider terms; others are suspicious of both abstractions and aggregates. And, in any case, the conditions for concerted and consolidated action informed by an adequate theory are just not there. And yet there is enough evidence to suggest that underlying the micro movements is a search and restlessness for a more adequate understanding of the forces at work as well as a more adequate response to them. The movements show a certain conviction that available ideologies are inadequate. They have enough experience which tells them that the existing instruments of formal politics - parties, elections, even the press and judiciary - cannot be expected to cope with the crisis in which they and those they work among find themselves. In one area after another, where we in Lokayan have had dialogues with activists working among the "untouchables", the landless, the tribals and various other segments of the rural poor, we found that none of the existing parties, including those that mouth radical slogans, really cared for these inchoate, unorganized and on the whole mute suffering masses. Hence the need for a new genre of organisation and a new conception of political roles.

It is a conception of politics that differs from party politics in that, for it, State power is not seen as the only - or even the predominant - object of politics. It sees an equal, perhaps even greater, necessity to keep struggling against injustices which are bound to occur no matter which party or coalition is in power. It believes in experimenting with new modes of organising social, economic and technological spaces, insisting on norms in politics and in keeping the intellectual ferment alive. The new conception of politics holds that that it is not enough to provide participation in the system; the aim is also to create a just society. Participation is necessary but not sufficient for this to happen. A just society needs self-government and a decentralized order through which the masses are empowered. But it is not decentralized in the sense of a scheme of territorial devolution of functions and resources to lower levels but decentralization in which the people are the centre.

For us in India there is no alternative but to move towards a pluralist, decentralized polity with a humane technology and a relatively self-reliant economy. Our concept is that the self reliance for the people, not just for the State as has been the thinking on self-reliance in the context of the New International Economic Order. In our highly plural context, a just society cannot be built except by the people coming into their own and assuming responsibilities for shaping their lives. We just cannot afford to hand these things over to experts. This may be possible in centralized and homogeneous societies like the Western ones. To follow that model in India is of necessity to create a dual society with large masses left out of citizenship, out of civilization really.

Fundamentally, the vision that informs the grassroots model of mass politics (as against the parliamentary or presidential or party model of mass politics) is one in which the people are more important that the state. This is crucial and it is not as simple as it sounds. In fact, in times we are living in, it is a revolutionary idea. The dominant tendency and mode of thought today is to place the state above the people, the security of the nation-state above people's security; the removal of real or imaginary threats to the state has become more pertinent than preventing threats to the people and their interests.

To restore to the people their sovereignty is not to undermine the role of the state but to transform it. This transformation can be achieved only through the transformation of the civil society, not the other way around. For this, the role of the centralized state must decline. The State will be very much there - some functions will have to be carried out by a centralized apparatus - but the State must basically operate in concert with other centres as well as other institutional spaces in civil society. And, for this to happen, we need to move beyond the nation-State syndrome of Statehood. We must, in particular, move beyond the 'national security State' syndrome which has been the source of both militarism and hegemonism in our time. In any case, so long as the 'national security State' rules the roost, the masses cannot and will not come into their own.

For us regaining power for the people, for communities, for autonomous societal forces is crucial. To that end Lokayan aims to be a "dialogue of the people". It still is not one, not adequately at any rate. But that is its conception. We need all the empathy and involvement and support that we can mobilize for this purpose - and a dialogue, a continuing dialogue with others similarly inclined in other parts of the world.

It is in this spirit of fellowship that we accept the Right Livelihood Award.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I have in this short statement gone over a range of issues and observations. But basic to it all is the theme of "Two Worlds" with which I started. We are fast moving into a situation where those belonging to that other world - the "vernacular" world - are not just getting marginalized and pushed to the peripheries of socio-economic and political systems; they are also getting pushed to the peripheries of our consciousness, our sense perceptions, our emotions. This is the most dangerous thing that can happen to this planet of ours - the danger of immunization, of amnesia as I mentioned earlier in this speech. It is this that we in Lokayan want to overcome and are struggling against. Hence the emphasis on dialogue, on building interrelationships. And we sincerely hope that the Right Livelihood Award to Lokayan will enable us to begin a process that carries the dialogue and the interrelations across the great divides that separate us globally, transcontinentally. If and when that materializes, we will have a global Lokayan underway. It is then that the objective of the "Right Livelihood" movement will be really fulfilled.

THE NEPAL LITERACY PROGRAM

World Education

Nepal is one of the world's least developed nations ranking 122nd among the 125 major countries of the world in gross national product per capita. The problem of illiteracy is a result of its underdevelopment but also contributes to Nepal's predicament. While the rate of illiteracy has declined in recent years (77 percent in 1980), the actual number of illiterates is larger due to rapid population growth. Women are especially disadvantaged. Among women aged 15 to 49 in 1980, nine percent had attended school. Among men of the same age, the figure is 40 percent.

Recognizing the importance of overcoming the severe educational deficiencies of its population, His Majesty's Government of Nepal has conducted literacy programs outside of the formal school system since 1956. The early programs suffered from many of the same problems that have plagued other large national literacy programs -- materials were poorly designed, teachers were unmotivated to implement the program, teacher training was inadequate, and there was nothing to read once learners acquired some skill. In 1978, when the existing national literacy program was being evaluated as unsuccessful, an experimental nonformal education project began with collaboration between CERID (the Center for Educational Research, Innovation and Development at Nepal's Tribhuvan University) and World Education, Inc. This experimental project impressed the Ministry of Education, and in 1980 the project staff moved to the Ministry and began development of the materials and methods now being used in the new national program.

With continuing assistance from World Education, the Ministry developed the program and expanded the pilot to six of Nepal's 75 districts. During the 1984 cycle of the program, some 18,000 participants were enrolled. Building on this experience, the Ministry has moved to further broaden the scope of its campaign, and the 1985 cycle will include 28 districts. Because of its success the program has been adopted by a number of non-governmental groups including UNICEF, the Peace Corps, Save the Children, Foster Parents Plan, the United Mission to Nepal and Action Aid.

This article describes the main aspects of the Nepal National Literacy Program. The program is built around a set of four 96-page primers, which will eventually be expanded into a set of six. Through an eclectic approach based on the work of Paulo Freire, the program covers basic literacy and numeracy while focusing on information of interest and relevance to people living in rural areas.

Approach to Literacy

The approach to literacy in the Nepal National Literacy Program is adapted from the method developed by Paulo Freire in Brazil. Freire describes the thinking of rural peasants as "magical", and this thinking, he says, leads to an attitude towards life that is profoundly pessimistic and fatalistic. Freire developed a method of instruction that combined the acquisition of literacy skills with the development of what he called critical consciousness. Persons with critical consciousness are aware of their own dignity and their capacity to shape their environment. Critical consciousness grows out of dialogue about meaningful situations. These meaningful situations, or generative themes in Freire's terminology, are presented in visual form so that they can be discussed as an object of reflection. A theme might be poverty, oppression, or the difference between nature and human culture. The discussion and analysis of these situations lead eventually to action to change the situation.

In the Freirian approach, teachers and learners are partners in a process of learning and discovery which uses a method that does not prescribe a particular point of view or direction. Critical consciousness begins by distinguishing between nature and human culture and the method begins with this theme. Nature is the medium in which all live, whereas culture is an addition which man contributes through his own efforts. All people have culture, not just the rich and the educated. Culture implies purpose, control, the shaping of one's environment and history.

The elements of literacy are taught through a minimal core vocabulary of key words. These are words that are not only meaningful to learners, but also are charged with emotional content, and are capable of stimulating discussion and awakening critical consciousness. The key words used include all the letters and basic sounds of the language.

While the Freirian method was the model for the design of the current Nepal program, the experience of other literacy projects was adapted to fit the context of Nepal. The games developed in the University of Massachusetts' Ecuador project and the work and problem focus of UNESCO's experimental World Literacy Programme were adapted for use in the program.

Approaches to literacy instruction are often described as being either analytic, synthetic or eclectic. Analytic approaches start with words or phrases and break them into component parts. Synthetic approaches start with the smallest elements of written language, letters or syllables, and build them into words and phrases. The key word approach used by the Nepal Literacy Program is eclectic in that it uses a method that is both analytic and synthetic. The key word is analyzed, or broken into syllables. The syllable are then used to synthesize new words.

Materials

To date, the program has produced a set of four 96-page primers. The first starts with simple words and letters and progresses to complete stories and informational pieces. At the end of the first primer, learners have covered enough information to read and write simple stories and do elementary math. All of the letters, punctuation, and sound combinations in the language and mathematical function are not covered until the learner finishes the fourth book. This slow unfolding of the written language and arithmetic allows the learners to practice using skills as they slowly acquire them.

Each learner receives a complete set of the books. Each teacher is provided with a manual that explains the instructional methods used and that presents lesson plans for each day of the classes. Each class also has a set of supplementary materials for use in group exercises. Each learner is provided with a blank workbook and a pencil.

At the outset of the program, each lesson follows the same general plan. The first page of the lesson presents a drawing that represents a major cultural theme or issue of rural village life. The following example is from Lesson one:

Each learner has the illustration in his book. A supplementary set of posters contains the illustrations in a larger format for use in group discussion.

The discussion of the theme proceeds in the following way. The class is divided into small groups of three to five participants. As large class size is necessitated by financial considerations of compensation for the teacher, program design calls for frequent use of small groups for activities. The participants are asked to discuss the illustration among themselves using the full page reproduction in their book. The instructor moves from group to group as the participants discuss the drawing. In order to help them with their discussion, the instructor uses the lesson plan discussion to facilitate small group activities. For Lesson One discussions, the questions which appear in the lesson plan are:

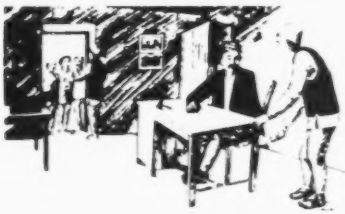
1. What do you think is going on in this drawing?
2. Is there any difference between the way the people in the illustration are working and the way we do these things in our village?
3. Is there a better way to do these things?
4. What kind of work is the hardest to do?

The purpose of the questions is to help the participants think about the different aspects of the situation shown in the illustration. No right answer is given or expected.

While discussion is taking place in small groups the instructor displays the poster to ensure that all are able to see it. After the small groups have discussed the illustration for about 15 minutes the instructor invites each group to select one member to come to the front of the room. Using the poster as a visual point of reference, participants explain what their group understood from the illustration.

After each small group has reported, the instructor asks the larger group to comment on any points not mentioned in the group reports. Participants are encouraged to think about real problems in their village. Whenever possible, learners are encouraged to discuss possible solutions for problems they have articulated and to consider concrete plans to solve those problems.

The questions suggested in the lesson are meant to help the participants examine issues at different levels. The goal of the discussion is to include not only identification of what is in the illustrations but also analysis, experience, feelings and judgment. The kinds of questions suggested include: identification questions such as, "What is this?" or "What is going on here?"; analysis questions such as "Why is this so?" and "How did this come about?"; and experience questions such as "Has this ever happened to us, and is this true of our village?" Feeling questions include "How do these people feel?" and "What would our reaction be if we were in this situation?" Judgment questions include "Is this situation good or bad?" and "Is there a better way to do these things?" This process of questioning and dialogue gives the learners a forum in which they can identify, analyze, and discuss village life and problems.



Other illustrations, like those provided on the previous page, focus on themes of poverty, differences in economic classes, environmental degradation, water resources, farming, schooling, market place transactions, attitudes toward male and female children, and bribery and corruption.

Key Words

In the first lesson, the discussion focuses on types of work. After the discussion has ended, the instructor presents the key word for that lesson, in this case "work". Nepali is written using the Devenagri script, the same script used for Sanskrit, Hindi and many other northern Indian languages. The script uses consonants combined with vowel signs and vowels that stand alone. The system is phonetic in that each letter or letter combination has only one sound. In Devenagri, every letter is also a syllable. There are some complicated conventions of combined consonants and rare letters, but these are not used at all in the first primer and play a minor role in the other books in the series.

A set of letter cards is used for the first five lessons. The consonant-vowel combinations needed for the key words are included in the set. When presenting a key word the instructor first presents the word using the syllable cards. The teacher pronounces the word, and then asks the learners to repeat it. The teacher then breaks the key word into syllables (in the case of "work" there are two), and pronounces each. The learners are then asked to repeat the syllables. The instructor adds the two syllable cards that represent other combinations of consonant and vowel signs that have been presented. As there are two consonants and two vowels in the first lesson, there are four combinations. The instructor pronounces all of the combinations with the group doing the same. Learners are asked to suggest other words that could be made with the same syllables. In the case of the first lesson there are three additional common words that can be made from the syllables in the word "work". The words are first pronounced by the instructor, then by the learners. Page two of the first lesson then presents the key word, the four syllable combinations that can be made from it, and the four common words.

The learners read all of the words and pronounce the syllables on that page, and this completes the reading phase of the key word activity. Then the class moves on to writing.

Learners are supplied with a blank writing pad and pencil, and all classes have access to a blackboard and chalk. The literacy books also have space for writing practice. The practice begins with shapes. Adult learners are sometimes unfamiliar with the small muscle movements need to make letters, and the practice of making simple shapes helps to build confidence int heir ability to attain thus skill.

The size of the print used in the primers is large and the space provided for writing exercises is ample. This aids understanding by people with poor eyesight and those unfamiliar with letters; it also allows learners to practice writing without being constrained by a small space. After some practice, the learners move to a simple test of what they have learned.

Supplemental Materials

Each class is given a set of supplemental materials to be used in learning activities associated with the exercises contained in the primers. These materials consist of a set of posters (40 centimeters by 73 centimeters) strung together with string like a calendar with illustrations on both sides so that they can be hung on the wall. These illustrations are a larger version of the key word pictures. In addition, each class receives three sheets of heavy paper with syllables printed on them. The sheets are of three sizes and are used in games and other activities in support of the primers.

One sheet contains the syllable cards mentioned earlier. The syllable cards are used for making "discovery charts" for the first five lessons. The discovery chart begins with just the four syllables shown in Lesson One. By Lesson Four, a total of 35 cards are in the chart (shown below). With 35 cards several hundred two- and three-syllable words can be made. Each of these large (6cm x 3cm) syllables are cut to form individual cards. Each card is marked for a hole to be punched at the top so that the card can be hung on nails provided by the project and which can easily be driven into the mud walls of the classroom.

The discovery chart can either be used by the teacher to show the key word and explain its component syllables, or it can be used to play simple learning games. To make the discovery chart the syllable cards are hung in rows on the nails placed so that the cards hang separately. Next to the chart is a work area with several rows of three nails. In this way cards can be taken from the discovery chart and placed on nails in the work area to make two or three syllable words. After a word has been made the cards can be returned to the discovery chart. The discovery chart for each lesson is also printed in the literacy book.

Games

Learning to read the syllables easily requires constant repetition. In the Nepal Literacy Program, games have proved to be a good way to practice recognizing and using the letters. Games involve excitement, cooperation, competition and fun, and provide a good means for the participants to learn among themselves and at their own pace. The role of the facilitator is to make sure the rules of the game are understood and that everyone has a chance to participate. The facilitator and the participants are free to modify the games, to make up variat-

ions and even to invent new games. Three games which are introduced early in the first cycle of classes are described below.

The first game, Challenge, is introduced on the third day. Its purpose is to help the participants learn the new syllables. To play the game the class is divided into two equal groups. The facilitator picks one learner from each group who is able to read the chart as the team leader. Each team leader is given five minutes to drill his team on the syllables. Then, one of the learners is asked to keep score on the blackboard or on a piece of paper. The game begins with one of the leaders pointing to a syllable card. He calls on a member of the opposite team and "challenges" him to read it correctly. If the answer is correct, the participant at the blackboard tallies one point for that team. If the answer is incorrect the team does not get a point. Now the other team leader points to a different syllable and "challenges" a member of the opposite team to read it. Team leaders must challenge each and every member of the opposite team once. After all have had a turn, the scorekeeper announces the winning team.

Match Letters is played for the first time on the fourth day. The purpose of the game is to help the participants recognize and name the syllables introduced in Lesson Two. This game is played with smaller syllable cards taken from one of the sheets provided to each class. The paper contains four sets of 24 cards. In this way the class of 30 learners can be broken into four groups of 7 or 8. After the learners have formed their small groups, each group is given a set of the cards and the facilitator explains the game. The 24 cards are spread out, face down, on a flat surface. The first player turns over two cards, one at a time. As he turns over each card he reads it to the group. If the participant fails to read either syllable, or reads either one incorrectly, he loses his turn. If the two cards are the same, the participant keeps them. If not, he turns them back face down in the same places where he found them. Play continues until all cards are taken. The players count their cards and announce to the group how many they have. The player with the most cards wins.

Another game played early in the first cycle of classes is Dictation. The purpose of the game is to give participants practice in making words using the syllables they have learned. Materials needed for the first five lessons are the syllable cards for the discovery charts for those lessons. After the fifth lesson the game can be played using the blackboard. To play the game, the facilitator calls a participant to the front of the room to make words with the syllable cards. Other participants suggest words from the lesson for the participant at the front to make. The class checks to see that the participant has spelled the word correctly. After making two or three words the participant at the front returns all the syllable cards to the discovery chart and sits down. Then, the facilitator calls another participant to the front and the process is repeated.

The purpose of each of the games used in the program is to give participants practice in recognizing and using the written symbols in ways that are fun and non-threatening. Games are a form of practice in that simple skills of recognition and pronunciation are used over and over. Games also discourage rote memorization because there is a spontaneity and excitement that comes from being involved in a game. At the same time, practice builds confidence in recognizing and remembering letters recently learned.

Stories

Research conducted in Nepal before the current project began showed that rural illiterate Nepalis could identify people and objects depicted in simple shaded drawings but that they had difficulty interpreting action and stories. In light of these findings, the primers include practice in reading illustrated stories and comics. These skills are introduced first in Lesson Two, using the following illustration.

The class is divided into small groups of three to five participants as for a poster discussion. Groups are asked to discuss the story represented in the series of illustrations. Each group selects one member to summarize the group's understanding of the comic and present it to the larger group. After each group's spokesperson has presented their

ideas, the facilitator raises points that might not have been mentioned in the group reports.

Three sessions later the group turns its attention to the comic story again. The class is again divided into small groups. The participants look at the comic and are asked to think about what the characters might be saying in each of the pictures. Each group selects four members to role-play the comic, who in turn enact the scenes using the dialogue they have created to go with the pictures.

In Lesson Three a dialogue between two characters is introduced. In the dialogue, the two characters are represented on either side of the words. The facilitator has individual participants read the lines from the dialogue. The facilitator questions the participants about the dialogue focusing on an understanding of the action between the two characters. In the following example, the action centers on the destination of the girl and what she will be eating.

कता काका ?
खेतमा ।
कता नानी ?
खाना खान ।
के खाने ?
तामा ।
के मा खाने ?
पातमा ।

कता नानी ?

खाना खान ।

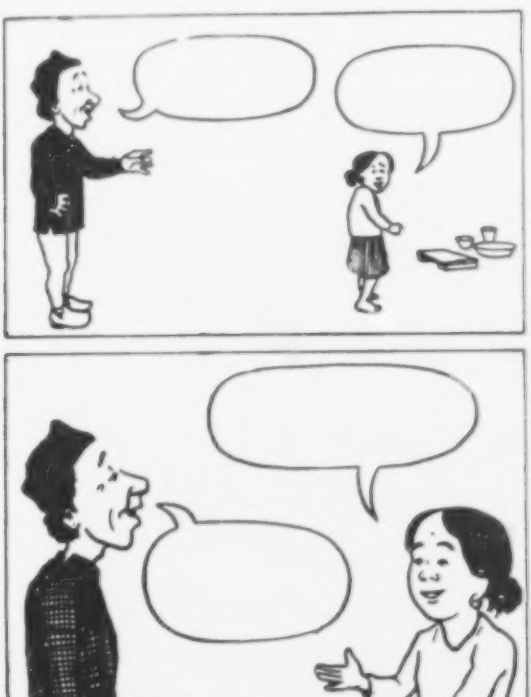
के खाने ?

तामा ।

कता काका ?

खेतमा ।

As part of the writing practice the class is asked to copy the words under the dialogue itself. The next page presents a comic representation of the dialogue and learners are asked to fill in the word bubbles.



A few sessions later the participants are presented with an entire story, incuding dialogue, displayed on two pages. The class is divided into small groups to discuss and later present their analysis of the comic story to the class. The following day the story is role played.

Through this process, learners develop skills in reading stories, dialogues and interpreting illustrations. As the first book progresses, participants are asked to answer questions about situations depicted in pictures, as in the following examples:

औंधी पानी कसरी बनाउने

धेरै जसे बच्चाहरू पखालाले मर्छन्। कितकि पखला लाग्दा पानी धेरै मात्रामा बाहिर निस्कने हुनाले शरीरमा पानीकमी हुन्छ। त्यसैले रोगबाट बच्चाहरूलाई बचाउन औंधी वा दूध दिनु भन्दा पहिले पानी खुवाउनु पर्छ। यो पानी खुवाएपछि छिरामिलाई केही समय बिसाएर खुवाउनु हुन्छ।

१. गिलास जसे गिलासको ६ गिलास वा दुई लिटर पानी कुनै लट्टा सफा हेक्ची वा भाँडोमा राख्नुहोस्। त्यसको गिलासबाट नापेर गिलासको घेरा समम हुने गरि राख्नु पर्छ। सफा खाने पानी पाउन भने पानी उमालेर राख्नु पर्दैन।

२. त्यस पछि दुई चिम्टी नुन हाल्नुहोस्। पाउन भने दुई चिम्टी खाने सोडा पनि हाल्नुहोस्।

३. दुई मुठी चिनी वा सक्करको पनि पानीमा हाल्नुहोस्।

४. त्यसपछि पानीलाई घुम्न, मोज्न र सक्करवर नपगले सम्म चलाउनु पर्छ। यसरी तयार गरेको औंधि पानीलाई फेरि तताउनु हुँदैन।

५. बच्चाले खान जति औंधी पानी खुवाउनु पर्छ। ६ खात घण्टा सम्म यो पानी खुवाउनु पर्छ। पानी खुवाउदा बच्चा थाम्सिन्छ भने अस्पतालमै भारम गर्न दिनु पर्छ। साथै केहि समय पछि फेरि पानी खान दिनु पर्छ।

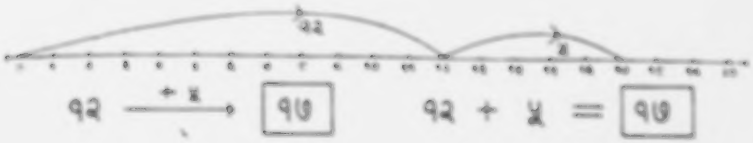
६. औंधी पानी खुवाउदा बीच बीचमा दुध खुवाउँदै जानु पर्छ। यसलेगा बच्चालाई खाने गरेको खाना खान दिनु पर्छ। त्यसैले बच्चालाई पखाला लागिरहे समम औंधी पानी र दुध वा खाना खुवाउँदै रहनु पर्छ।

Halfway through the first book, a full, multi-page story is presented in comic format. This story is about a man who drinks, gambles and treats his wife badly. He spends the money his wife earned and saved and gets in a fight with her. She leaves him and returns her family. He follows and asks her forgiveness. The story ends with the wife trying to decide whether or not to believe him. The class is asked to discuss what they think she should do. To finish the story, the learner must go on to Book Two. Each of the remaining books have elaborate dramatic stories in comic format that are serialized between two books, thus adding to learners' motivation to continue with the classes.

In the current programs, numeracy instruction begins on the first day of classes. The facilitator explains how to do tallying using a blackboard or a piece of paper and pen. Tallying with slash marks in groups of five is demonstrated and the participants are asked to count things using the tallying method (see previous page). The tally marks are also used to keep score in the initial literacy games that are played. For the first 16 sessions, only tallying is used. In the 17th lesson the Nepali numbers are presented. The introduction of the numbers begins with an exercise in tallying and the number signs for one through five are shown next to the tally marks. The page of the book on which the numbers are presented has an illustration of fish in groups of one, two, three, four and five fish. Learners are asked to tally the fish and then read the number signs. Later, the numbers 6 to 10 are presented in the same way.

Near the end of the first book, simple addition and subtraction are presented. In the beginning, illustrations of objects are used as an aid to learners' understanding of the mathematical functions being presented.

In the first primer only additional and subtraction up to 10 are presented. In the second book number lines such as the following are included to help in the learning and practice of addition and subtraction.



At the end of the second book, instruction returns to the use of illustrations of objects and sets of small circles to introduce multiplication. In the third book number lines are used for multiplication. The same process is used for teaching division. Books Three and Four provide a practice and expansion of the four basic operations, using the conventional representations without visual aids. In addition, written problems are added. When a more difficult aspect of these basic maths functions is presented the books revert to the use of visual aids.

Content

In addition to literacy and numeracy, a full range of development topics are covered in the first four books. This information comes up in group discussions in the first two books and is dealt with in a general way in the stories that provide reading practice and in the problems that provide numeracy practice. In the third and fourth books, direct instructional articles are presented like the one on oral rehydration therapy, presented on the following page.

There is no pretense about the books being complete instructional materials on these topics. The books provide an opportunity for these subjects to be raised, discussed and a few important facts presented. To be skilled in any of these subjects, though, the reader would need further instruction. The goal of these materials is to raise the issues and provide enough information so that the reader will be motivated to seek further help.

Implementation

Nepal is divided into 75 administrative districts with the literacy program being administered at the district level. Each participating district is given a quota of 25 classes. Each class has one teacher and 30 students. The teachers are chosen by a local village committee set up to monitor the program with help from the district education office. Usually, teachers are from the formal school system. Each teacher is paid 200 Rupees (17 Rupees + $1.00) per month to teach the course, and this forms an important supplement to their income (on the average a teacher in Nepal makes 500 Rupees per month).

Learners are self-selected and all are accommodated if possible. This has led, in some instances, to classes as large as 60 in number. The classes are free of charge and generally follow a schedule of two hours per night, six nights a week for one month per book (four months at this time). This schedule can be varied to fit the needs of the learners and availability of teacher time.

The Government is implementing about 74% of the classes. The other 25% are being undertaken through efforts by non-governmental organizations and parastatal integrated rural development projects. Some of these institutions are following the government implementation plan while others are experimenting with alternative methods. For example, CERID is experimenting with small classes of women and girls taught by girls with primary education. Save the Children Federation is asking students to pay part of the cost of materials and teacher salaries. Some of the government classes are run directly by government personnel while others are implemented with assistance from local groups such as womens' clubs and Lions' Clubs.

Training of Teachers

Teachers are trained for six days by trainers experienced in the implementation of the program. They are trained in four types of techniques - presentation of new material, small group learning, games and testing. The presentation of new material and testing are teacher-centered activities with the other two being learner-centred. Teachers are instructed to use all four types of techniques as a way to ensure that at least half of a class period is devoted to learner-centered activities. Experience has shown that teachers prefer using traditional teacher-directed methods common to the formal school system. Additionally, a lesson plan that allows teachers to teach in a formal way for part of the class and directs them in the use of participatory techniques for part of the class has been found to increase learner participation.

Presentation of new material is done in a traditional way. The teacher presents the new word, letter or math function and orally drills the learners. Small group learning begins with peer teaching in small groups. Tasks might range from discussing a poster to reading a story or working out math problems. Next, one of the learners from each group reports the results of the small group work to the rest of the class. Finally there is a general discussion led by the teacher. The discussion might focus on comprehensive questions or might involve the group in correcting math problems. Games are played in small groups with minimal help from the teacher. Testing is informal and includes dictation and other teacher directed activities.

Training begins with a discussion among the teachers of the differences between teaching children and teaching adults. This leads to an understanding of adult education principles that are the basis of the program. During the training the teachers take the roles of both teacher and learner so that they can experience the techniques from both points of view.

Future

Books Five and Six are now in the design stage. They will focus on income generation and family planning. The first will present case studies of income generation projects already successfully implemented in Nepal.

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SCHEME OF DEVELOPING THE PEASANTS' EDUCATION UNDERTAKINGS 1983-85

Jilin Department of Education

An Outline entitled "Development of Jilin Provincial Industrial and Agricultural Sparetime Education" was discussed and formulated in the meeting of Jilin Provincial Industrial and Agricultural Educational Work in 1979, and has later been approved and distributed to the various departments for implementation. In the past several years, under the leadership of the Party Committee and government at all levels, and through the arduous struggle of the Departments of Education at all levels, other relevant departments and the broad mass of the peasants' educational workers, the peasants' education work in this province has been greatly developed. Following the spirit of the "Scheme Outline", the local administrations have concentrated their main efforts on wiping out the illiteracy and the semi-illiteracy among the youths and the middle-aged persons. Up to 1982, 1,070,000 illiterate and semi-illiterate have become literate. The rate of literacy among the youths and the middle-aged persons has reached 97.1%. Forty-six counties and municipalities, 975 villages and townships checked and inspected according to the stipulation, have been fundamentally up to the standard of literacy. Elementary cultural and technical education among the peasants has made rapid progress, and secondary cultural and technical education has also made considerable progress. Since the universal adoption of the household contract responsibility system in the countryside, the broad mass of peasants' need of studying science and technology has become more and more pressing, yet there are still some problems in developing the peasants' educational undertakings or in unfolding the peasants educational work, which should not be overlooked: eg, the leading cadres being incompetent, work developed unevenly, low coverage rate of peasant education, low enrolment rate, and the peasants' education quality unfit for the development of agricultural production. According to the census, there are still 3,600,000 illiterate and semi-literate persons in the countryside, among which 248,000 are youths and the middle-aged persons.

In order to raise the cultural and technical levels and be fit for transformation of traditional farming to modern farming, the urgent demand for qualified personnel from self-support economy to large scale commodity production, it is necessary to develop further the peasants' education in this province. In view of the above, we hereby map out a "Scheme of Development of Jilin Provincial Peasants Educational Undertakings between 1983-1985".

Guiding Principle

Further implementing the instructions on peasants' education by the Party's Central Committee, the State Council, adhering to the orienta-

tion of developing the rural economy and serving the peasants' desire of getting rich and prosperous, based on the reality existing in this province, it is necessary to motivate the positivity of running schools by all circles of people, develop multilateral, multimedia, multiform peasants' cultural and technical education in a broad and deep-going way, and raise uncreasingly the cultural, technical and political level of the broad masses of peasants to bring up different kinds of useful qualified personnel to promote the build-up of the "two civilizations" in the countryside.

Working Task and Concrete Demands

The general task for the peasants' education in our province between 1983-1985 is as follows:

> Seek to wipe out the remaining illiteracy in order to consolidate the result; vigorously develop the peasants' elementary cultural and technical education; steadily develop the peasants' secondary cultural and technical education step by step; strive to build up a solid peasants' education stronghold; constitute an integrated system with rational distribution of peasants' education.

The concrete demands are:

* Continue grasping the work of wiping out the remaining illiteracy and consolidate the result of wiping out illiteracy.

  There are still 248,000 illiterate or semi-literate youths and middle-aged persons aged from 12 to 40 in this province. In spite of the small number, they are dispersed far and wide, the majority of them are women and the middle-aged. So great difficulty still lies ahead. Local administrations should overcome the feeling of fearing difficulty, of slackening, of tiredness, in reaching the remaining illiterate persons, to sum up experience earnestly, to do the job well. The stress should be laid on youth illiterates and semi-literates, stop the forming of new illiterates and prevent those who have become literate from going back to being illiterate again. We must take measures of guaranteed teaching and guaranteed learning, having pupils of primary schools doing teaching work, and other forms of teaching, to enrol illiterate and semi-literate persons to learn. Strive to organize 50,000 people to take part in the literacy classes annually, and strive to make 40% of them; ie, 20,000 persons, literate. In two years the enrolment will reach 100,000 with 40,000 persons becoming literate. The Department of Education of this province will check on this work throughout the province in 1985.

* Energetically developing the peasant elementary cultural and technical education

To develop the peasant elementary cultural and technical education in the two subsequent years. Villages, townships, communes should run school at different levels. Compulsory primary school education should be popularized among the cadres, agricultural technicians in the villages, townships and communes in 1985. We must organize 60% of the peasants who had recently become literate but still not up to the level of primary school graduate to study the courses of the primary school. We shall make 50% of them reach the level of spare-time school graduate. The spare time primary school is different from the full-time primary school, the former should give courses mainly on Chinese language, mathematics, agricultural knowledge and political knowledge. Peasants' elementary technical schools should be set up in the villages and townships enthusiastically in order to teach elementary technology. The Department of Education is to set up a batch of the peasants' technical schools, giving the support first to the key schools, then sum up the experience, spreading them around, strive to set up such kind of school in one fourth of the townships, with a total enrolment of 10,000 students.

* Steadily develop the peasants secondary cultural and technical education step by step

The peasants secondary cultural education will mainly be given in townships. With the help of the full time middle schools, the township may give some junior middle school classes. If circumstances permit, the township may run senior middle school class too. There are pre-requisites needed to the secondary technical education, especially the teaching staff. Members can be organized to listen to the Radio Agricultural school courses. Attention must be paid to improving the teaching quality, making each member reach appropriate level; it is not fit to lower the standard. Schools giving systematic education may run short training courses.

Emphasis must be laid on the political ideological work, paying attention to supporting the Party's rural work and propagate to peasants the Party's line, principles, policy and educate them with "Five Stresses, Four Points of Beauty and Three Love", and collectivism, communism, laws and regulations, population education and so on.

Some principal measures:

* Raising the level of understanding and strengthening the leadership.

"Two Civilisations" in the countryside. Governments at all levels, especially villages and townships must place peasant education on the agenda, and grasp it firmly to achieve good results. It is necessary to have a person specially assigned to take charge of it, work out an overall scheme, have a division of labour and a general check-up, besides, it is necessary to support relevant departments to solve major problems occurring in the course of development.

* Bringing the functioning department into full play

The educational department should exercise its control on peasant education, formulating relevant policy and regulations, laying stress on systematic regular cultural and technical education, training cultural and technical teaching staffs, editing and writing textbooks and reference material, coordinating the relationship with relevant departments, summing up and exchanging experiences.

Different agricultural departments, scientific societies, the Communist Youth League, and the Women's Federation must do their part and through joint efforts to grasp the peasants education well.

* Strengthening the building up of a contingent of the peasant education

In order to strengthen the leadership and administrative work, administrations in charge of the peasants education are to be set up in townships, counties, prefectures and provinces. It is necessary to assign capable cadres, and build up a qualified peasants contingent of cadres and professional and part-time teaching staff. The contingents of cadres for peasants education must be stable, not to be transferred to do other kinds of jobs. It is necessary to improve the quality of the contingent of the peasants education and train them in order to do better work. Care should be taken of their political life and welfare treatment, to bring their positivity to do better work into full play. Educational departments at all levels are to set up teaching and research organization of the workers and peasants education, provide them with capable staffs to carry out the teaching and research activities.

* Adhering to unfold the peasant education through multiforms and multi-channels

Counties, villages and townships are to conduct the peasants education at all levels. The educational departments and relevant departments must care about and support peasants education, advocating and encouraging the retired, resigned teachers, cadres and personnel undertaking scientific and technical work to engage in peasant education. The ways and contents of teaching should not be formularized and simplified, or unified. They can vary with different persons, different locality, different time. It is necessary to combine cultural education with technical education,

systematic education with short term training, theory with practice, to meet the different demands from the peasants.

Making appropriate arrangements for education funds

At present, the fund appropriated to the peasants education is comparatively small, so it must be managed well and spent properly. The fund earmarked for special use is not to be diverted to any other purpose. Expenditure should be properly administered. It should never be misappropriated under any pretext. At the same time, ideological work should be done to encourage, advocate and call for the collectives and individuals to invest in peasant education. School organizations can raise funds through part-work-part-study programs.

Formulating and perfecting the necessary stipulations and regulations to make school management better

It is necessary for cultural and technical schools of all grades, of all kinds to formulate a teaching plan and syllabus; to establish teaching staff's personnel file. The secondary or higher peasants cultural and technical schools must amplify systems of enrolment, assess proficiency, check on work attendance, leave, reward and penalty.

To set up systems of examination, appraisal for peasants education. Each year the county and the township should have a general check on peasant education.

To formulate regulations on the management and approval of the elementary and secondary cultural and technical peasant school.

Each district, each department, each unit should map out in compliance to the provincial scheme and integrated with the actual condition of its own locality, starting from the present situation and have a broad future in mind, make out an applicable peasants education scheme.